

Northampton Mercury

THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2015

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STARS SHINE IN CHARITY FOOTBALL FUND-RAISER

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WARNING OF DANGERS OF SWIMMING IN LAKES

AS THE SUN ARRIVES, EXPERTS URGE CAUTION AROUND WATER

County firefighters have urged people not to swim in lakes, following the recent rise in spring temperatures.

They have warned that a condition called Cold Water Shock, which numbs the muscles and can make it difficult to swim, can happen on even the warmest of days if people swim in cold canals, rivers and lakes.

Brigade manager Dawn Whittaker, of Northants Fire Service, who also leads water safety nationally, said: "While reservoirs, lakes, rivers and other inland waters may look safe and inviting, particularly on a warm day, there are also hidden dangers below the surface that could make you ill, hurt you and – at worst – could kill you.

"We do not want to stop people enjoying water, but we do want to ensure that people of all ages are more aware of the risks that can be present in

and beside open water."

Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service held a public water safety day at Stanwick Lakes last week to raise awareness of the campaign and will also be visiting schools to spread the safety message.

Experts have warned particularly of Cold Water Shock which can affect a person's breathing and muscle activity.

The cold water causes the blood vessels in the skin to close up, meaning the heart has to work harder, and this can even lead to a heart attack in some people.

Safety messages will be shared on the brigade's Facebook and Twitter accounts and members of the public are being encouraged to support the campaign by sharing or retweeting the safety message.

To find out more about the campaign, visit: www.cfoa.org.uk/CFOADrowningPreventionWaterSafetyWeek



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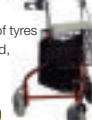


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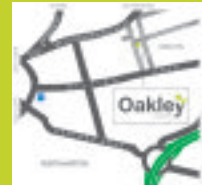
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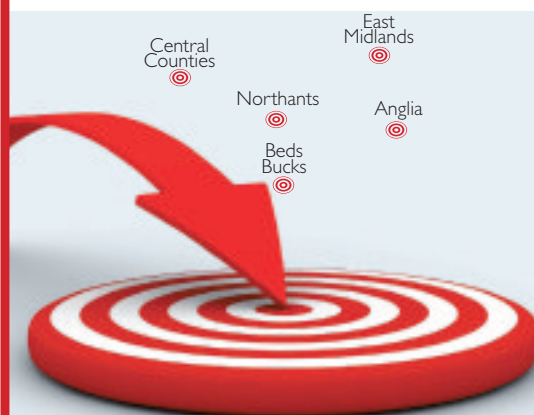


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Sabirah Shefta has run in several half marathons but her hopes of doing a full 26 miles in London have been threatened by a knee injury (below)

Marathon doubt as cyclist hurts runner

A woman may be unable to compete in her first London Marathon after she was knocked over by a cyclist and suffered a deep cut "the size of a tennis ball" on a leg.

Sabirah Shefta, of Harpole, was close to completing her last long training run at Pitsford Water on Easter Sunday at 3.30pm, when a cyclist came up behind her and caused her to lose her balance.

The 27-year-old struck her leg against a large rock as she fell to the floor and suffered a deep cut below a knee.

Although the cyclist did not stop, Ms Shefta was helped by another cyclist and two people who were walking round the reservoir at the time.

An ambulance was called and Ms Shefta was taken to Northampton General Hospital. The injury to her leg required eight stitches.

Chris Masters, Ms Shefta's partner, said he was "furious" the cyclist had ridden off without stopping to check if she was okay.



He said: "I think he could have offered an apology. Accidents do happen but you don't just leave people stranded.

"There is also the knock-on effect. She has been building up to the marathon for the past year and she has not been

able to go to work this week.

"I also took a day off work and this incident could have messed up her last 12 months' training," he added.

Ms Shefta, who has run the Great North Run half marathon five times but never run a marathon, said she did not believe she had been injured deliberately by the cyclist.

She said: "I think it was one of those things.

"He may not have realised he had knocked me over. I think I fell on the largest rock in Pitsford."

Ms Shefta said she was still hoping to take her place in this year's marathon and was hoping to raise £1,500 for Health Poverty Action, an international organisation helping to strengthen the health of poor and marginalised people.

She said: "I will find out whether I can run when they take the stitches out.

"It was just soft tissue damage and I didn't damage any tendons or bones.

"If I can't take part I will defer my place for next year."

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Memorial pitch plan could lose out to battlefield find

Plans to create a football centre at Delapre are hanging in the balance after the discovery of the world's oldest cannonball on an ancient battlefield site.

Gail Butcher launched a bid to create an all-weather pitch and clubhouse in the area around Delapre and Far Cotton in 2011 to stand as a lasting legacy for her son, former Kettering Town and Rushden & Diamonds player – and ex Northampton Town trainee – Richard Butcher, who died in his sleep aged 29.

But four years since she and Northampton Borough Council drew up outline plans to use a flat section of land at Eagle Drive for the pitches, she has been told that it cannot be used, after tests revealed the



Richard Butcher

oldest surviving cannonball had been found nearby.

The council said the cannonball find made it likely the land had played host to the 1460 Battle of Northampton and had a conservation plan for the site.

But Mrs Butcher said the Richard Butcher Memorial Trust has raised nearly £40,000 to build the pitches and felt the council had gone back on earlier promises.

She said: "I want to know why I can't use that piece of land? Why, all of a sudden, is this land not an option?"

"The cannonball was found years ago, so why suggest this land to me in the first place?"

"I have fought and fought for this, only to be told they can't do anything for me."

At a meeting with the borough council on March 4, Mrs Butcher was offered two other plots of land; one 'sloping' patch to the north of Eagle Drive, and a smaller flood plain to the rear of the Marriott Hotel, also off Eagle Drive.

But she believed neither

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Gail Butcher at Eagle Drive, where she had hoped to build a football pitch and clubhouse for the local community

were appropriate within her budget. She said: "Even with funding I would spend all of that money just levelling the land out." Mrs Butcher said she would be willing to hold an archaeological dig before any building work took place.

However, if the football pitch bid should fall through, she has vowed to use the

raised funds for charitable purposes, and said she would consult with the public before allocating the money.

A spokesperson for Northampton Borough Council said: "We have always supported Mrs Butcher's aspirations for a memorial for her son and we have tried to work with her to find a location. We have pre-

sented a number of options that would meet all of her requirements, each of which she has chosen to decline.

"Although we are sympathetic to her campaign, there is only so much land owned by the borough council and we cannot offer what is not available to us or suitable for development."

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Trevor Skidmore feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 10 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people money, although

that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service the Northampton, Kettering, Wellingborough & Corby areas and Trevor is finding that his

approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for,

which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

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Stars come out for charity fund-raiser

More than a thousand spectators watched a host of sporting heroes take part in a charity football match in memory of a Northampton rugby legend.

Former Saints rugby star Matt Dawson was among the celebrities who took to the pitch at Sixfields on Sunday for the Leon Barwell Foundation Trophy match.

The game, between the Leon Barwell Allstars and the Leon Barwell Legends, finished 4-4 with former Cobblers striker Neil Grayson netting a hat-trick for the Allstars.

The end-to-end match provided some standout moments, in particular England rugby ace Ben Cohen's pass which set up fellow World Cup winning team mate Mike Catt to score for the Legends.

Paula Barwell, wife of the late Saints chairman Leon, said the event will have raised thousands of pounds to give families battling cancer a chance to create new memories.



Matt Dawson signs autographs for spectators at Sixfields

She said: "It was a great turn out, it was great fun and there was a great atmosphere. "I'm glad it ended a draw, both teams played so well."

The Leon Barwell Foundation was launched last year in memory of Leon, who died of cancer aged 45, in June 2013.

The foundation now aims to fund short holidays and trips for families in Northamptonshire who are dealing with a similar situation.

Former Saints scrum-half

Matt Dawson failed to get on the score sheet and pulled up with a slight injury in the first half, but the Question of Sport team captain said: "It was great to just hang out with some of my old mates and see plenty of people turn out for a fantastic charity."

Among the other stars taking part were former Cobblers captain Ray Warburton, cricket legend Allan Lamb and ex-England rugby winger Jason Robinson.

PICTURES BY DAVID JACKSON



Neil Grayson (right) was man of the match, watched above by ex-Saints winger, Ben Cohen

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Council's fine threat over 'poop bags'

Dog owners in Northamptonshire would be fined up to £1,000 if they cannot produce a 'poop bag' for their pet when walking them, under a new law that could be adopted by a council.

In a bid to reduce the amount of dog owners failing to clear up after their pets, Daventry District Council is considering using new powers in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, which forces people to produce 'poop bags' or containers or risk being given a fixed penalty notice of £100.

The new law will be enforced by dog wardens and failure to pay the fine may result in the dog owner being taken to court and being fined up to £1,000.

Maria Taylor, community manager for Daventry District Council, who has written a report on the potential adoption of the new law, said it was accepted that it might not be



Dog owners have been warned that they face fines of up to £1,000 if they do not carry a 'poop bag' with them

popular.

She said: "It is recognised that the additional powers which form part of this consultation have the potential to be controversial.

"However, dog fouling continues to be a major concern for our residents and the narrow confined path around Daventry Country Park is a cause of concern to many persons who have to pass close to dogs that are not under proper control," she

added.

The council, which already uses three dog control orders (DCOs) to target dog fouling, dogs in play areas and dogs on leads, currently receives more than 40 complaints about dog attacks and more than 120 complaints about dog fouling.

However, the report which is due to be discussed at a Strategy Group meeting today (Thursday), states this figure "fails to reflect the real level of concern across the district" as many residents report their concerns to their parish rather than the district council.

Before the council decides whether to introduce the new laws, a 10-week consultation will be carried out to see if it has public support.

If the new power is adopted, the council said it was also planning a substantial educational campaign and the use of an "informal approach" in the first few months of it being introduced.

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Police chief defends rise in violent crime

The number of violent and sexual crimes in Northamptonshire has increased by 50 per cent in the past 12 months following a change in the way crimes are recorded by the force, latest figures show.

Data in a report presented at a meeting of the Northamptonshire Police and Crime panel showed there were 11,133 recorded incidents of violent crime from March 2013 to March 2014, up by 3,785 – or 51.5 per cent – on the same period in the previous year.

The number of recorded sexual crimes was 1,234, up by 58.8 per cent, equivalent to 457 more offences. However, Northamptonshire Police has posted a reduction in the recorded number of burglary and theft from motor vehicle offences.

The total number of recorded crimes in the county was 45,682, up by 12.4 per cent on the previous year.

Last year, an HMIC inspection of Northamptonshire



Commissioner Adam Simmonds says the majority of the violent offences were "without injury" after it was revealed there had been an increase

Police's crime data revealed the force was failing to record some serious offences.

In response, Chief Constable Adrian Lee said violent

crime figures were likely to go up in 2014/15 as the force was now recording offences as violent crimes "even if there were no injuries".

In a report presented on Tuesday, Police and Crime Commissioner Adam Simmonds said the figures showed an increase in violence but said the "majority of the offences were without injury".

He said: "Data from partners does not indicate an escalation in injuries relating to violence, suggesting that the county is not becoming more violent."

"Reducing violent crime remains a key priority for the force and is at the heart of making Northamptonshire the safest place in England."

"The current levels are unacceptable and I want police to adopt a zero-tolerance approach to those committing violence offences."

"Violence takes many different forms and requires us to be creative to address the problems in the long term."

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Motors

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Jeep bounces back to form

Jeep might be famous the world over for building cars that will climb mountains, but the brand itself is digging itself out of a pit that could have seen it sink into obscurity.

Dealers were losing an average of more than £130,000 a year and lots of them jumped ship. Things, in short, could not have looked bleaker.

Well, what a difference three years can make. The car you are reading about today is not only the first Jeep to be built outside the USA (in Italy, actually) it is also confidently

expected to become the best-selling Jeep in the UK.

The Renegade is aimed squarely at the likes of the Nissan Juke and Mini Countryman.

With prices starting at £16,995 for a decently-equipped 1.6 litre petrol model with air con, DAB radio, Bluetooth and alloy wheels, the Renegade looks convincing even before you turn the key.

There are diesels to choose from too and four trim levels, all the way to the £27,995 Limited with 2.0 litre diesel engine, all-wheel drive and

nine-speed automatic gearbox.

Bold owners who opt for the 4x4 models will discover a car capable of taking a quite demanding series of hills and hollows, and a seashore being washed by an incoming tide.

The 2.0 litre on test managed 39mpg and never felt lacking for power. It also presented an interior different enough to be interesting and just the right side of kitsch.

A near-useless sat nav and hard-to-release automatic parking brake apart, the top ranking Renegade impressed.



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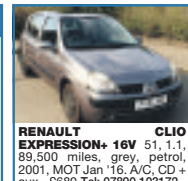


55, 1.6, 42000 miles, red, petrol, 2005, Full service history, taxed till May MOT till November, good condition, careful owner. £2,300 **Tel: 01858 565539**

2005

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Renault



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2001

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Honda



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2002

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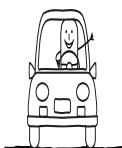
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SPORT

Last-gasp goal denies Cobblers

McDonald strike secures point for Oxford after Toney opener

FOOTBALL

Chris Wilder's return to the Kassam Stadium was ruined by a late Alex MacDonald strike as missed chances cost Cobblers in a 1-1 draw against Oxford United on Tuesday.

Wilder, who left Oxford for Northampton in January last year, looked set to celebrate a sweet success after Ivan Toney's first-half free-kick gave his team the lead.

But MacDonald made the away side pay as he fired past debutant goalkeeper Shwan Jalal in injury time to secure a share of the spoils.

Cobblers had created plenty of opportunities against a stagnant home team, who were booed off by their fans at the break. But the men in yellow finally had something to cheer late on, leaving Wilder and his men disappointed at the end of an evening which they dominated.

One piece of good news came in the form of Marc Richards, who got his first game time since suffering an Achilles tear early last month.

The striker had been named on the bench and came on for the final 15 minutes, but it was one of the players filling the void his absence had left who had the first Cobblers effort.

Toney, who was to be a key

player for the Cobblers, hit a sweetly-struck volley that was deflected wide.

The resulting corner saw John-Joe O'Toole fizz a header past the far post before Josh Ruffels fired high over the bar at the other end.

Aside from that wayward effort, Oxford were offering little, while Cobblers' threat was coming at set pieces, with Lee Collins becoming the latest player to head wide.

O'Toole then had a shot blocked by Johnny Mullins before Zander Diamond, climbing high at the back post, failed to hit the target.

The natives were growing restless and Cobblers soon got the goal their good play had merited as Toney's free-kick bounced over the diving Jamie Ashdown and into the net.

Ruffels tried to respond with a drive that was deflected into the arms of Jalal, but the home side had offered little during a first half controlled by the Cobblers.

Oxford were lucky not to concede again early in the second half as O'Toole's ball across the box almost found Toney. There were finally signs of life in the Cobblers area soon after as right-back Sam Long sent the ball forward for Danny Hylton, who fired wide with only Jalal to beat.

Toney then turned sharply at the other end, curling his ef-



BRIGHT SPOT Ivan Toney accepts the congratulations after firing the Cobblers into the lead at Oxford United on Tuesday

PICTURE: KIRSTY EDMONDS

fort just past the post, before Hylton's strike from a Kemar Roofe cut-back was deflected wide. Joel Byrom was wasteful when well placed in the Oxford area as his shot sailed over, while Diego De Girolamo almost connected with a teasing cross soon after.

The Cobblers were desper-

ate to add the second goal they deserved and they continually hassled and harried the home side, who were making mistakes in possession.

But there was still a fear that Oxford would land a sucker punch and when Jalal came charging out to try to gather a free-kick, panic set in.

Long found himself well positioned, but with the net gaping, he blazed wide.

Cobblers then brought on Richards for Toney, who had earned his standing ovation, in a bid to make the game safe and the striker immediately had an effort blocked.

But Oxford were about to

get their act together, with the fourth official's signalling of four minutes of added time sparking them into life.

Jalal rushed out to punch a ball clear, but when it came back into the box, MacDonald finished low across the keeper to secure a draw.

Tom Vickers

Saints sign South African centre Howard

NORTHAMPTON Saints have further strengthened their squad for next season with the signing of Western Province centre Pat Howard.

The 23-year-old was part of the Provinceside that won the 2014 Currie Cup, and earlier this season spent three months on a short-term with Munster, playing in both the Pro 12 and

RUGBY UNION

European Rugby Champions Cup.

Howard had returned home to Cape Town to join the Western Province squad ahead of the Super Rugby campaign, but he will now be heading north to join Saints this summer.

"I really enjoyed my time

in Europe earlier this year and was delighted when Saints showed interest in me," said Howard.

"It is a great opportunity for me to be joining a fantastic club and continue to develop as a player. I cannot wait to pull on the Saints jersey!

"I have had a great time coming through the ranks at Western Province, but feel

that now is the right time to experience something new overseas."

Howard was a Junior World Championship winner with South Africa in 2012, and Saints director of rugby Jim Mallinder is delighted to have secured his signing.

"Pat is a young player who has shown plenty of promise in the Currie Cup, Pro 12

and Champions Cup," said Mallinder.

"We've been impressed by what we've seen, but believe that there is more to come from him and are looking forward to seeing Pat develop in our squad."

Howard made 22 appearances for Western Province, scoring five tries, and played nine times for Munster, dotting down

once in a Champions Cup hammering of Sale Sharks.

He has played three times for South Africa Under-20s, scoring once.

Saints are without a game on Saturday as it is the Champions Cup semi-final weekend.

Mallinder's men were well beaten 21-10 in the Aviva Premiership at Exeter last Sunday.